

B1 a barrel adapted to house a pledget therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a fingergrip area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said fingergrip area having at least one substantially flattened surface with at least one gripping structure selected from the group consisting of embossments, slits, perforations, lances, pressure sensitive adhesive, and any combinations thereof, wherein said fingergrip area has a reduced diameter relative to said barrel,

wherein said at least one substantially flattened surface and said at least one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or said plunger.

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Please amend claim 13 as follows:

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13. (Amended) A tampon applicator comprising:

B2 a barrel adapted to house a pledget therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a fingergrip area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said fingergrip area having at least one convex gripping surface with at least one gripping structure, wherein said fingergrip area has a reduced

diameter relative to said barrel,

wherein said at least one convex gripping surface and said at least one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or said plunger.

[ Please amend claim 14 as follows: ]

B2 14. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 13, wherein said fingergrip area comprises at least one pair of diametrically opposed, convex gripping surfaces.

[ Please amend claim 15 as follows: ]

15. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 13, wherein said fingergrip area comprises an odd number of convex gripping surfaces, and wherein at least one of said convex gripping surfaces is diametrically opposed to a pair of adjoining convex gripping surfaces.

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Please amend claim 17 as follows:

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B3 17. (Twice amended) The tampon applicator of claim 16,

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cont wherein said at least one convex gripping surface is at least two convex gripping surfaces, and wherein each of said at least two angled shoulder surfaces are disposed adjacent to each of said at least two convex gripping surfaces on said fingergrip area.

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Please amend claim 18 as follows:

B4 18. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 13, wherein said at least one gripping structure is selected from the group consisting of embossments, protuberances, slits, grooves, louvers, perforations, lances, abrasive media, high wet coefficient of friction materials, pressure sensitive adhesives, and any combinations thereof.

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Please amend claim 19 as follows:

B5 19. (Twice amended) A tampon applicator comprising:

a barrel adapted to house a pledget therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a fingergrip area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said fingergrip area having at least one concave gripping surface with at least one gripping structure selected from the group consisting of

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embossments, slits, perforations, lances, pressure sensitive adhesives, and any combinations thereof, wherein said fingergrip area has a reduced diameter relative to said barrel,

wherein said at least one concave gripping surface and said at least one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or said plunger.

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Please amend claim 20 as follows:

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20. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 19, wherein said fingergrip area comprises at least one pair of diametrically opposed, concave gripping surfaces.

[ Please amend claim 21 as follows: ]

21. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 19, wherein said fingergrip area comprises an odd number of concave gripping surfaces, and wherein at least one of said concave gripping surfaces is diametrically opposed to a pair of adjoining concave gripping surfaces.

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